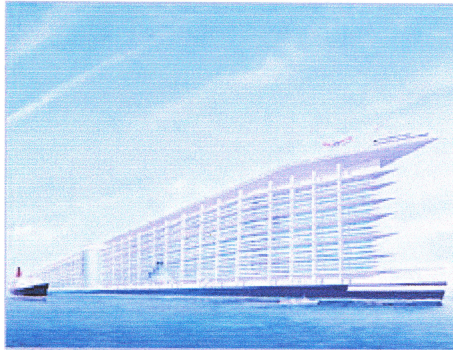


20,000 daily visitors and 3,000 commercial enterprises, including banks, restaurants, grocery stores, and video-rental places.

A normally deadly 100-foot wave will move the ship about one inch, according to Gooch. The ship's 1.7 million square feet will displace 2.75 million tons of water. In comparison, the largest ship currently floating, an oil tanker, displaces about 500,000 tons of water.

In other words, it's a behemoth.



Freedom Ship

A drawing shows the front of the Freedom Ship.

hasn't been done before."

However, its creators think size is the least interesting thing about it.

"The mission of the ship is to be an autonomous community," Gooch said. "It's a commerce center, a place where people can retire or work or have as a secondary residence and visit new cities and work from their home. The mission isn't mystical. It simply

To that end, the ship has been designed in a way unlike any cruise ship. There are ocean-view suites that cost up to \$40 million and cover thousands of square feet. But the ship will include less expensive apartments so that there will be a viable middle class. And smaller 450-square-foot studios are available for about \$130,000, a steal by New York City, San Francisco or Tokyo standards.

"We're not trying to be an elitist community," Gooch said. "All the classes per se are on this ship so you get the feeling you're in a community that happens to be waterborne."

Like any land-based city, the ship will also have its own police force and jail. Gooch said the security team will number 2,000, meaning there will be one cop for every 10 residents. But, after Sept. 11, Nixon and Gooch said, the residents will be glad to know they're safe.

"After 9/11, anything is a target that's that large now, but we're probably in a more secure environment than you in a land-based environment," Gooch said.

The 500 engineers and countless workers who will build the ship are scheduled to begin construction this summer and should complete the ship in 44 months. If the ship does well, they might build three or four more ships like it, each crewed by 5,000 to 10,000 staff, Gooch said.

The first resident is ready to move in.

"As soon as I build this joker, I'm going to retire and live on it," Nixon said.

[RESPOND TO EDITOR](#) [EMAIL THIS ARTICLE](#) [PRINTER FRIENDLY](#) [BECOME A FOX FAN](#)

[Back To Home](#)

[Back To Top](#)